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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 YAOUNDE 000951

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DEPT FOR AF/C, INL/C/CP AND EB
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA ACTION OFFICERS
EUCOM FOR J5-1 AFRICA DIVISION AND POLAD YATES

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KCOR](#) [PINR](#) [EAID](#) [CM](#)
SUBJECT: CAMEROON ELECTIONS: SHINE COMES OFF RULING PARTY
WIN

REF: A. YAOUNDE 939 (NOTAL)

- [1](#)B. YAOUNDE 929 (NOTAL)
- [1](#)C. YAOUNDE 910 (NOTAL)
- [1](#)D. YAOUNDE 904 (NOTAL)
- [1](#)E. YAOUNDE 902 (NOTAL)
- [1](#)F. YAOUNDE 894 (NOTAL)

Classified By: Poloff Tad Brown for reasons 1.4 b and d.

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Less than two weeks after the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) party claimed crushing victories in July 22 parliamentary and legislative elections, a strengthening chorus of complaints from opposition and civil society groups and even discord within the CPDM has begun to take the shine off an otherwise overwhelming victory. Press reports indicate more than 100 separate appeals have been submitted to the Supreme Court, raising the possibility that some results may be annulled and put to a revote. Charge attended a July 31 meeting of heads of like-minded diplomatic missions, which revealed widespread cynicism within the donor community regarding the Government of Cameroon's political will to effectively strengthen democratic processes. End summary.

Despite Growing Grumbling, the Process Continues
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[1](#)2. (U) Despite escalating claims from opposition parties and in the press that the July 22 elections were marred by irregularities and outright fraud, the Government of Cameroon (GRC) continues to move ahead with the implementation of the election results. The newly elected municipal councils met July 31 and August 1 to select who from among them will serve as mayor. Discontent among CPDM members that started in the party primary processes earlier this year (reftels) was reignited by a CPDM Central Committee directive released earlier this week that ordered CPDM representatives to vote for the Central Committee's chosen mayoral candidate. Some have justified this heavy-handedness as a Central Committee effort to ensure no unsavory CPDM council members are selected as mayor, but party officials in the field have complained to the press about the Central Committee's less than democratic practices.

Like-minded Countries Share Dismal View of Elections
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[1](#)3. (C) A July 31 meeting of chiefs of mission (COMs) of EU member states plus Canada, Japan and the U.S. revealed a shared sense that the Government of Cameroon (GRC) had failed

to meet minimal expectations for the conduct of the July 22 elections. The Canadian High Commissioner (who hosted the event) will circulate the draft text for a shared letter to the GRC and will request a high-level meeting where a delegation will convey the views of the group. Looking forward to next steps, there was general agreement that a reengagement of the Commonwealth, especially with a view to implementing the new elections agency ELECAM, would be desirable. Post is currently discussing the draft text for a public statement to be made jointly by the embassies that fielded observer missions: the US, UK, Netherlands and Canada.

CPDM's Crushing Victory: An Embarrassment of Riches

14. (C) The British and French COMs reported that their conversations with individuals senior in both the GRC and CPDM led them to conclude that some CPDM leaders are embarrassed by the CPDM's lopsided victory, especially in light of low voter registration and turnout. One senior CPDM leader reportedly averred that the CPDM would better off to suffer a net loss of seats in Parliament (which it would still control with a large majority) and thereby gain in domestic and international credibility. The British COM opined that the Presidency might give the Supreme Court a freer hand to overturn particular results in the interest of shoring up the credibility of Cameroon's democratic institutions.

Supreme Court Receives Motions to Annul

15. (C) More than 100 appeals were submitted to the Supreme Court asking for annulment of election results in various constituencies. Acting Pol-Econ Chief met separately on July

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26 with representatives from the People's Union of Cameroon (UPC) and the Coalition of Alternative Forces (CFA), each of whom had filed appeals with the Supreme Court. Both parties complained that the CPDM had used its control of government resources and especially election management to manipulate the outcome of the elections.

SDF Ups the Rhetoric

16. (U) John Fru Ndi, the head of the leading opposition party, the Social Democratic Front, has released the SDF's own tabulation of results indicating the SDF won 30 seats in Parliament (as opposed to the 14 reflected in MINATD's announced "trends"). Fru Ndi has publicly demanded that all of the election results be thrown out and the elections re-run after the establishment of an independent electoral agency. He has also suggested that the SDF will not participate in the next Parliament if the current election results are allowed to stand. Fru Ndi has called an August 2 press conference in Yaounde.

NELSON